

Helena Citizens' Council
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
June 22, 2011 – Room 326 City-County Building

Members Present

Bob Habeck, Jim McCormick, John Forbes, David Scrimm, Jim Penner, Lorabelle Behlmer, Janet Hess-Herbert, Kris Goss, Ellen Bell, Roy Henry, Albert Bruce Clark.

It was determined that a quorum existed to conduct official HCC business as outlined in the HCC By-Laws Article V, Section 2.

Call to Order & Introduction of Guests

The June meeting of the Helena Citizens' Council (HCC) was called to order by Jim McCormick, Chair of HCC, at 7:00pm. Guests in attendance included Officer Steve Hagen from the Helena Police Department; Tom Baird and Tim Ravndal representing the L&C Conservative Tea Party; Joe Kolma, city resident; and Mary DuVernay, city resident.

Minutes

The May 2011 minutes were on the agenda for approval. Kris Goss asked about the status of the 'Board & Committee Transition' topic as being either an action item or report item. It was determined the topic was a report item. David Scrimm motioned to approve the May 2011 minutes with an amendment to reflect the Board & Committee Transition topic was a report item. Motion seconded by Janet Hess-Herbert. Motion passed unanimously.

Reports of Officers, Boards, & Standing Committees

Helena Police Department Report

Officer Steve Hagen from the Helena City Police Department provided the police report. Officer Hagen reported on the status the police force staff during the summer season. Helena lost a police officer due to retirement and others are temporarily out due to family matters. Overall, police officer staffing is down five positions. Currently, there are three officers in training. Officers will also be on motor cycles this summer as weather allows. Additionally, as funding will allows, officers may be on bicycles and un-marked cars.

Guest Speaker: Administrative Services Director Tim Magee

Tim Magee was not available for discussion tonight. Representatives from the Wednesday June 22 City Admin meeting will report out on various topics of interest.

District Reports

- District #1: No report.
- District #2: Petty neighborhood thefts. Downtown businesses witnessing increased summer vandalism.
- District #3: No report.
- District #4: Collin Waters could not make it – excused absence.
- District #5: No report.
- District #6: No report.
- District #7: Public complaint of traffic speeds along Winne Ave. et al. Issue included the city's response to public complaints – customer service response to citizens.

Elections. Discussion included conversation on HCC elections. David Scrimm summarized candidates filing to date.

Ellen Bell suggested HCC consider spending money for a newspaper advertisement to recruit HCC candidates. Lorabelle Behlmer agreed to take the lead on pursuing an advertisement. Motion by Kris Goss to allocate funds for advertisement up to \$300 on Friday (6/24) and \$500 on Sunday (6/26). Motion seconded by John Forbes.

Discussion. Janet asked to amend motion to increase expenditure up to \$1,000 for use no later than June 27th. Amended motion agreed by Kris Goss. Amended motion seconded by David Scrimm. Motion passed unanimously.

Resignations. Sande Wilson resigned from District #7.

City Commission & Admin Meeting Reports

Jim McCormick summarized the status of the HCC / Commission effort on transitioning city boards and committees. The MOU between the HCC and Commission for this transition effort was signed by the Commission on June 13th.

Lorabelle Behlmer attended the June 22 Admin meeting. The 2012 proposed city budget is 60 million. At the June 27 Commission meeting, the city will take public comment on the budget and take final action.

Further HCC discussion included the topic of the bike/ped coordinator position. Alan Cormany is retiring and the city is not planning on backfilling this position with a bike/ped engineer. The city Transit Coordinator's position will also be reduced to ½ time as well. HCC is concerned that bike/ped issues are not being prioritized as committed to by the city. HCC has worked hard to promote bike/ped issues for many

years. HCC may need to get further involved on the Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC), or through comments to the city at a Commission meeting, or perhaps through the new position hiring process.

Standing Committee Reports/Various Board & Committee Reports

- Finance / Budget committee:

John Forbes reported the budget is solid and can fund the \$1,000 for the approved recruitment advertising. Next year will prove interesting for the HCC budget and the quest to secure the HCC support position. Ellen Bell stated the city is holding the line from last year about spending and proposed department budgets. Nothing new is being proposed – maintaining essential services.

- Marketing Committee:

Lorabelle Behlmer had no report. She will pursue the HCC election advertisement.

- Committee & Board Transition Subcommittee:

Janet Hess-Herbert stated that she met with Ron Alles and Debbie Havens the week of June 6th to discuss the board and committee transition logistics. Janet stated that time is needed to review the new committee and board resolutions / charters to better understand those groups better. Additional help is requested.

Ellen Bell and Lorabelle Behlmer attended the Public Arts Committee who is looking for new members. Jim McCormick reported that HIAC Chairman, Doreen Kutufam is out of the country and meetings are cancelled for the summer. Doreen put the HIAC vice-chair in the loop. He committed to contacting the International Affairs Committee to continue the integration efforts, including encouraging them to run for HCC positions.

David Scrimm cautioned the council that securing membership on these new board and committees, and HCC, may create an issue due to the current membership requirements of these entities. Janet Hess-Herbert mentioned the HCC needs to keep talking about this issue – perhaps through a future strategic planning session.

- Transportation / Governmental/Non-Motorized Committees:

David Scrimm mentioned that priority non-motorized projects have been identified. For example, a priority project is to strip bike lanes along Helena Avenue. This project would need to go out to bid. City Manager Ron Alles will consider other suggestions.

Kris Goss talked about the grand opening of the new city bus depot. Additional conversations about the proposed transit district will begin again this fall. An

awareness campaign will be considered to link the new bus depot with the effort to create a new transit district.

Lorabelle Behlmer mentioned that she attended a meeting that recognized citizens (and city officials) are not totally aware of city transit routes, fares, and processes. John Forbes echoed this sentiment. More transit awareness is necessary.

Public Art / Urban Wildlife / International Affairs Committee Reports

Discussion on these topics is included above.

HeyNet Meeting Report

No report.

Unfinished Business & General Order(s)

- **Cell Phone Ban Survey:**

Kris Goss reported that he informed the Commission of HCC's intent to solicit public comment on a proposed ban on cell phone use while driving. Survey results would be shared with the Commission and the public. The Marketing Committee will pursue this effort.

- **'Boom Cars' – Noise Issue:**

David Scrimm suggested that HCC table this effort. Neighbor support and understanding has waned. It remains an issue, but the extent of the issue and proposed solution remains at question. Lorabelle Behlmer added that it's a seasonal issue like skateboards on the walking mall – how to effectively address those types of issues is difficult.

David Scrimm motioned to table current efforts on boom cars. Motion was seconded by Kris Goss. Discussion included notifying George McCauley, citizen, who brought this issue to HCC's attention. Motion passed unanimously.

- **HCC Staffing Subcommittee:**

Janet Hess-Herbert asked for comments on the Citizen Council Coordinator Job description announcement. Janet provided some comment already. She asked how long HCC should wait to provide Robyn with comments? Provide all comments to Janet by July 6th to forward to city. Note: This position is not an administrative support position – rather it is a professional position that seeks to provide HCC with professional services.

- Citizens Conservation Board:

David Scrimm asked about the status of a previous HCC recommendation to the Commission requesting the creation of a Citizens Conservation Board. This topic needs to be further evaluated.

New Business

No new business.

Project Updates

No new topics.

Public Comment

Tim Ravndal, representing the L&C Conservative Tea Party, introduced himself and stated his organizations' mission. His group is available to assist with city matters and looked forward to working with HCC in the future.

Joe Coleman was interested in listening to the boom car issue. He agreed the topic needs to be discussed further. The solution may need to be developed through better organization of neighbors.

Mary DuVernay was present simply to witness the HCC meeting.

Announcements

- Upcoming Meetings:

Administrative Meetings:

July 6, 2011

July 20, 2011

City Commission Meetings:

July 11, 2011

July 25, 2011

Adjournment

Next HCC meeting will be on July 27. Meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Meeting Minutes were taken by Bob Habeck.